(b) CSIR has increased its interaction with industry and its contacts with various associations of commerce and industry.

Plan to melt the Himalayan Snow

1104. SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have approved any plan to melt the Himalayan snow to augment water supply; and

(b) if so, at what stage the plan is and by when it is likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRIMATI KRISHNA SAHI): (a) and (b) Efforts are being made to undertake R & D activities in the field of seasonal snow melt so as to judge its operational viability and evolve packages of contingency plans of action in case of acute shortage of water in regions depending on snow melt.

Plight of Indian Workers in Iraq

1105. SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a group of 32 Indian workers, including senior engineers and technicians, are trapped in a nightmarish situation in Iraq;

(b) whether these workers, recruited by a Chandigarh based construction company, have neither been paid nor allowed to leave Iraq for the last 3 years; and

(c) if so, the action taken by Government to help these workers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (PROF. K. K. TEWARI): (a) to (c) Through the active intervention of the Government 594 of 630 workers of Punjab Chemi Plant have already been repatriated to India at Government expense. Efforts to repatriate the remaining workers are continuing and these workers are likely to return to India very shortly. The question of settlement of the salaries of these workers and their repatriation to India was linked with an agreement between the Indian contractor and the Iraqi client regarding completion or otherwise of the housing project. The Ministry of Commerce, the nodal Ministry for project exports, is actively involved for the past few years in working out an overall settlement with the parties concerned. These negotiations are at an advanced stage of finalisation.

Development of Dornier-328 Aircraft

1006. SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether India has decided to participate in the design and development of a 1990 generation regional airliner, Dornier-328; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE PRODUCTION AND SUPPLIES IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI CHINTAMANI PANIGRAHI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Military Co-operation between Pakistan and China

1107. SHRI B. SATYANARAYAN REDDY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that the military co-operation between Pakistan nad China is being strengthened and there were reports of Pakistan acquiring hundred T-59 tanks from China in addition to the fleet of 1,100 Chinese tanks already in Pakistan;